

AN ANALYSIS OF CONFESSIONS IN RUSSIAN TRIALS

1. ORIENTATION:

Since the notorious Moscow trials of 1937, overt Russian judicial procedure has been noteworthy for the dramatic trials in which the defendants have exhibited anomalous and incomprehensible behavior and confessions. Characteristics and manner of the defendants, and formulation and delivery of the confessions, have been so similar in a large number of cases as to suggest factitious origin. Most noteworthy and incredible has been the recent "confession" of His Eminence Cardinal Josef Mindszenty while on trial in the People's Court of Hungary ~~was charged~~

The evident incongruities prompted this study, the purposes of which were to analyze a number of instances of trials and confessions to investigate:

- a. The overall pattern of the arrest, trial, and performances of the members of the cast.
- b. The occurrence of any consistent or recurring details of procedure or behavior.
- c. If the foregoing formed a congruent pattern, the method by which the result was achieved.

2. PROCEDURE:

Source material was widely diverse and reference is made to significant items. It became apparent at the outset of the study that the style, context and manner of delivery of the "confessions" were such as to be inexplicable unless there had been a reorganization and reorientation of the minds of the confessees. There is adequate historical experience to establish that basic changes in the functional organization of the human mind cannot be brought about by the traditional methods of physical torture--these at the most, achieve a reluctant, temporary yielding and, moreover, leave their mark upon the victim.

Newer or more subtle techniques had, therefore, to be considered for the working hypothesis. Among the recognized methods are:

- a. Psychosurgery: a surgical separation of the frontal lobes of the brain.

- b. Shock method:
 - (1) electrical
 - (2) drug: metrasol, cannabis indica, insulin, cocaine.
- c. Psychoanalytic methods
 - (1) psychoanalysis
 - (2) narco-analysis and synthesis
 - (3) hypno-analysis and synthesis
- d. Combinations of the foregoing.

In order to develop group patterns of behavior and interactions certain significant elements were tabulated, Chart 1.

MINDSZENTY

1. Regression to infantile state of abject dependency on a parental object (the State), characteristic of hypnosis (consistent with transference phenomenon), a basic change in character structure result hypnosis.
2. Necessary to determine:
 - a. Technique for dealing with resistance--repression dynamism.
 - b. Technique for obtaining regression to specific age level.
 - c. Reconstruct the psychodynamics of the change in the functional organization of the patient.
 - d. How the procedure is accelerated--resistances are high--usually require long periods for resolution and full interaction with control (therapist).

Repeated and prolonged hypnosis during which subject re-conditioned unconsciously to his associational sensations--thus associated with personality and character change.

Conditioning of sensation to extraneous, innocuous events (as key words).

Background:-- Psychoanalysis aims at a reorganization of the mind. Conscience was divorced from the standards imposed in early life.